

FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD

THULE TIMES

821st Air Base Group Thule AB, Greenland

October 2, 2006
Volume 1

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Thule Times Editorial Staff

Col. Edward Fienga, 821 Air Base Group Commander
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September—non-stop action

By Col Edward Fienga, 821 Air Base Group Commander

Welcome to our new monthly Thule Times. We have gotten through a busy month and I want to take a little column space to thank all of Team Thule for your professionalism and tremendous effort.

We kicked the month off with a flawless visit from Gen James Cartwright, Strategic Command commander. I could not have asked for a better visit. He and his team thoroughly enjoyed their visit.

The Air Force Space Command Inspector General team showed up for a week long inspection right on the heels of General Cartwright's visit. Team Thule came together performing every task given to us with a ease and dedication that did not go unnoticed.

The months of preparation and training carried us through the inspection and even though we were not



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Staff Sgt. Christopher Douin and Tech Sgt. Duane Duren, 821 Security Forces, provide external security during an exercise alarm response at the Finance building.

given our own grade, the feedback from the IG team was positive. Team Thule is doing great things everyday.

Even though we had the inspection, normal operations here at Thule did not stop. We had Operations Bostop and Brilliant Ice running 24 hours a day, with five aircraft moving well over 180 metric

tons of dry goods and over 194,500 imp gallons of fuel to our fellow northern tier bases.

We also had the final ship for the season arrive and depart during the inspection.

To round out the month we had IG follow-up, storm season preparations and end of the fiscal year close out. Not to mention a visit from the Chief Scientist of the Air Force, Dr Mark Lewis, and the Rob Byer band.

September was one heck of a month. We have come through it with amazing fortitude and enthusiasm and I'm proud to be part of Team Thule. As we head into October and the dark months ahead, the pace may slow down but I know that we will keep leaning forward and improving Thule for future generations. Stay safe and remember to take care of yourself and your wing man.



Photo by Tech Sgt. Robert Bondurant

Thule firefighters standby to put out a vehicle fire during an IG vehicle accident/fuel spill exercise.

BOXTOP II 2006 and BRILLIANT ICE Complete: Mishap Free

By Tech Sergeant Kevin McGarry, 821 Support Squadron

Led by Airfield Operations Flight Commander, Captain Mark Oden, Complex Chief Controller Senior Master Sgt Vincent Marler, the air traffic controllers (five U.S. and two Canadian) and the airfield operations personnel of the 821 Support Squadron, Operations Boxtop II 2006 and Brilliant Ice are complete and mishap free.

Two weeks of 24/7 airfield operations have resulted in the successful re-

With beautiful Thule weather, the air traffic control team in conjunction with the base operations staff and visiting pilots ensured a zero delay and a 100 percent on time rate both to and from both areas of responsibility.

It would be remiss to not mention our neighbors to the North (actually West of Thule) who augmented our manning during these operations. The operations could not have been a success without their help. Captain Adam Ackerson from Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake, Canada and 1Lt Marie Jacques Gauthier from CFB



Photo by Tech Sgt Raymond A.B. Twofeathers

Full ramp at Thule

Several aircraft prepare to take 183 Canadians participating in Operation Boxtop II 2006 home. Four Canadian C-130s transported about 180 metric tonnes of dry goods and over 190,000 imp gallons of fuel to Canadian Forces Station Alert during the ten day operation.

completed training in 60 percent of the allotted time. Suffice to say that without their help we could not have provided the manning required to make the 24/7 operations a success.

Air Traffic Complex Chief Controller, SMSgt Marler, Airfield Operations Flight Commander, Captain Oden, 821 Support Squadron Commander, Major Steven Moore, and 821 Air Base Group Commander, Colonel Edward Fienga,

would like to express their thanks to all who helped in the safe completion of the second leg of these 2006 resupply missions—activities which will sustain both life and mission at two of the world's most remote military installations. Your dedication and professionalism does not go unnoticed and continues to make a constructive difference in our Nation's—and in Canada's and Denmark's—defense.



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Danish Station Nord

Supplies are down loaded from a Ukrainian Soviet made Ilyushin Il-76 during Operation Brilliant Ice at Danish Station Nord.

supply of Canadian Forces' Station Alert and Danish Station Nord. The combined efforts of the Canadian Air Force and Ukrainian-contracted flight crews, accomplished an astounding 90 plus mission sorties, delivered more than 400,000 pounds of dry supplies, 949,000 gallons of fuel, and more than 183 passengers safely and efficiently.

Baggotville, Canada arrived at Thule one week prior to the commencement of Boxtop and Brilliant Ice Operations. The two host nation officers had to obtain a rating in one area of the TRACAB. 1Lt Gauthier received her local control tower certification, while Captain Ackerson obtained his instrument flight rules approach radar certification. Both



Photo by Tech Sgt Raymond A.B. Twofeathers

Welcome to Canadian Forces Station Alert.

It's That Time of Year Again

The 2006-2007 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) drive will run from Oct 1 until Oct 21.

Last year, the CFC raised a record setting \$268.5 million for different charities from across the country. To make

this year a successful one the goal is to have 100 percent contact across the base and a record setting amount from the members of Team Thule.

CFC contributions can be made in the form of cash, check or by payroll deduction.

The CFC was established in 1961 and is the largest workplace charity campaign in the United States. This annual fall fund-raising drive allows nearly 4 million federal employees and military personnel to contribute to thousands of local and national nonprofit organizations. On average, one in four federal employees or their dependents will benefit from the CFC charities this year alone, according to CFC officials. Donors may designate which charities receive their money by filling out a pledge card.

Local CFC project officers and representatives have more information and will be coming by your place of work soon.

Thule CFC co-chairs are:

Tech Sgt Kevin M. McGarry,
821 Support Squadron
Duty Phone: 2670



2nd Lt Osei Boakye, 12 Space
Warning Squadron
Duty Phone: 5225

Unit POC's are:

- 821 SPTS/OS
Capt Mark Oden
Duty Phone: 3613
- 22 SOPS/DET 3
Tech Sgt Edgar Marvine
Duty Phone: 6275
- 12 SWS
Staff Sgt Athena Sanders
Duty Phone: 5270
- 821 SFS
Staff Sgt Jason Vanhook
Duty Phone: 3234

Visit the CFC Website for more information and a list of the 2006 CFC participants.
www.opm.gov/cfc

Compiled from Staff Reports



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Tech Sgt Kevin McGarry, Combined Federal Campaign Thule co-chair explains the CFC handbook to Col Edward Fienga, 821 Air Base Group commander, as he signs his contribution to the CFC.



by Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFP) -- Oct. 11 to 15 has been designated Absentee Voting Week by the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

Overseas voters should mark and return their state absentee ballots or the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot during this week, federal voting officials said.

It is imperative to mark and mail ballots as soon as they are received, they said. If a state absentee ballot has been requested but does not arrive by voting week, a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot should be submitted. In the event the state ballot shows up after the write-in ballot is sent, it also should be marked and returned.

Votes will not be counted twice, but in the event the state ballot makes it to the state by the deadline, it will generally be counted instead of the write-in because it includes nonfederal offices, according to information on the FVAP

Web site.

Absentee Voting Week is not the first push made to get overseas voters to participate. In early July, Overseas Citizens Voters Week began the push to get DOD people overseas to register to vote. Armed Forces Voters Week followed in early September. Again, it was a push to encourage those who had not registered and requested an absentee ballot to do so, officials said.

Many changes have been made since the absentee-voting system was criticized in 2000, officials said. In that election, numerous ballots were disqualified for lack of postmarks or other reasons. One of the biggest changes made is the effort to make registering and voting as easy as possible for those voting under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizen Absentee Voting Act.

Since states' requirements vary, voters should consult the FVAP Web site and check state-by-state instructions to determine submission deadlines and rules for state absentee ballots.

Filling out Standard Form 76

To help ensure your vote counts, officials remind personnel to be careful when filling out the SF 76 as it is most often returned without action for the following reasons:

- * Inadequate legal voting residence address
- * Address information was not sufficient to locate members voting precinct or ward
- * Inadequate current mailing address – Member moved or deployed without forwarding an SF 76, letting the state know his new address and the post office will not forward ballots.
- * Writing illegible
- * Failure to indicate party preference – Primary ballots will not be sent without a party designation
- * Form incomplete – All information specified in the VAG must be completed
- * Application sent to wrong jurisdiction (see addresses listed in the VAG)
- * No signature



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Seth Arens, a scientist with the National Science Foundation, explains to Col Edward Fienga, 821 Air Base Group commander and Chief Master Sgt Bruce Heinzen, 821 ABG superintendent, how lamps are heating the tundra for a research project focused on the biocomplexity of arctic environments.

By Capt Elizabeth Paul, 821 Air Base Group Public Affairs

Over the past four years, Thule has served as the base camp for a team of scientists who run about half a dozen research sites in the local area.

The team of rotating scientists have

National Science Foundation

been researching the effects of warming and the release of carbon in the high arctic.

Thule is the ideal place for arctic studies as the ecosystem here is representative of other ecosystems in the high arctic but unlike other sites Thule offers an infrastructure which is unbeatable.

"It is a great opportunity for us to be able to take advantage of the established infrastructure in this unique environment,"

said Seth Arens one of this years visiting scientists.

The base hosts the scientists during their five month stay and supplies the electricity to run some of the experiments. During the winter months, the scientists return to their respective homes

to study and compile the data collected during the summer.

"Since there are few places in the high arctic which have the infrastructure to support research in this inhospitable terrain, this is a great opportunity for Air Force to support the National Science Foundation," commented Col Edward Fienga, 821 Air Base Group commander, during a recent tour of the project sites. "The cooperation between our two US government agencies only makes sense."

The projects include measuring carbon levels in soils and plant life in unaltered plots of land as well as in plots heated and watered to varying levels, all in effort to gain a better understanding of productivity in arctic environments. They are also looking at how snow effects the ecosystem and weather monitoring.

The NSF has been conducting research around Thule on these projects for four years.

Team Thule gets new Airmen Center



Courtesy Photo

Above: Staff Sgt Steve Hale checks out progress on the new Airman Center during construction.

Below: During The Airman Center's Ribbon cutting attendees try out the new X-box games.



Photos by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Team Thule received a welcome addition to the bases' recreational opportunities in the form of a new Airman's Center August 31.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held in honor of the event, officially marking the second floor day room of building 103 the Airmen Center.

The Airmen Center was established with an award grant from the Air Force Chief of Chaplain's Office.

The new Airmen Center has four flat screen TVs, a seating and dining area, X-box games and more. It is also the new home of the Thule Chapel-hosted "Game Night".

Right: Col Edward Fienga, 821 Air Base Group commander, Chief Master Sgt Bruce Heinzen, 821 ABG superintendent, Staff Sgt Steve Hale, 821 ABG Chaplain Assistant and Chaplain (Capt) David Zavala cut the ribbon officially opening the Airman Center August 31.



Lawmakers, DoD Take Aim at Payday Loan Sharks

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Sep. 1, 2006 - Interest is building on Capitol Hill in putting a nationwide cap on the interest rates lenders can charge servicemembers for loans, a measure the Defense Department is pushing to protect its force.

A General Accountability Office study released last month offers insight into how payday-lending businesses frequently gouge troops short of cash by charging exorbitant interest rates on loans borrowed against their next paychecks.

"The Report On Predatory Lending Practices Directed at Members of the Armed Forces and Their Dependents" notes that as many as one in five servicemembers are falling prey to loan centers near military bases.

It estimates that 13 to 19 percent of military people took out high-interest, short-term loans last year - typically borrowing about \$350 a pop at interest rates of 390 percent to 780 percent.

These loan centers have sprung up like dandelions around military bases. According to the report, they target young, financially inexperienced borrowers who have bank accounts and steady jobs, but also have little in savings and credit problems or maxed-out credit balances. The report cited an airman at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., as an example of the troops who enter into these loan agreements to begin a cycle of debt that's nearly impossible for many to reverse. She initially borrowed \$500

through a payday loan with an agreement to pay back \$600 in two weeks. She then took out other payday loans to cover that bill and ended up doing multiple rollovers on each loan.

Ultimately, the airman contacted an installment loan company that gave her a \$10,000 loan at a 50 percent annual percentage interest rate. The total cost to pay off the payday loans came to \$12,750, and her total obligation to the installment loan company rose to \$15,000.

The Defense Department notes that the airman is far from alone and is exerting a major effort to educate troops about the potential dangers of predatory loans and better ways to manage their finances, the GAO report notes.

The expanded education effort, launched last year, reached more than 400,000 servicemembers and their family members in 2005. In announcing the program, John M. Molino, then the deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and family policy, noted that the wide use of payday loans within the military has the potential to impact on mission accomplishment.

"If you're in debt, you have other things in mind," he said. "You're doing things other than concentrating on the mission; maybe you're taking on other employment. The effects are long-lasting and go deep into a person's performance. It affects unit readiness."

In addition to educating military members about the dangers of payday loans and familiarizing them with ways to put themselves on a sound financial footing,

the military is seeking better protections for its members, and Congress is taking heed. Among measures DoD wants to see instituted are:

-- A requirement that lenders disclose information regarding the extension of credit in a uniform, unambiguous way;

-- A federal ceiling on the cost of credit to all military borrowers, capping the annual percentage rate; A ban on lenders extending credit to servicemembers and family members without regard for their ability to repay the debt;

-- A prohibition on loan contracts that require servicemembers and their families to waive their rights to take legal action and on contract causes that require them to waive any special legal protections afforded to them; and

-- A ban on states discriminating against servicemembers and families stationed within their borders, and on lenders from making loans to servicemembers that violate the state's consumer protections.

The U.S. Senate passed an amendment in June that establishes a 36-percent cap on annual percentage rates on loan to military members and their families. The bill is now in conference committee with the House of Representatives.

In addition to DoD and members of Congress, Paul Leonard from the Center for Responsible Lending expressed hopes that the amendment will pass. "We're hoping Congress will stand up to the payday industry," he said. "Our service people deserve far better than financial ruin - or trying to survive in a war zone while they're fretting about how they'll pay next month's bills."



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE SERVICES PRESENTS

tops in blue

When: Saturday October 21

Time: To be determined

location: Hanger 7

what's love?

at

SERVICES



Thule Commentary -The Best Open Door Policy

By Capt Frank Reyes

Leaders, the best open door policy is to open the door and step out from behind your desks and into the field where your Airmen are.

I learned this sage advice years ago as an Army cadet. My Professor of Military Science, Maj Terrance W. Hall, introduced me to a book written by Col. Dandridge M. Malone, USA (Ret.) titled *Small Unit Leadership: A Commonsense Approach*.

In his book, Col. Malone, addresses the importance for leaders to get out from behind their desks and engage with their troops (Airmen) in an environment other than in the leader's office and offers the following;

"I open the door and go out to where our troops are, and I talk with as many of them as I can, right there on the job or in the field, while they're doing their work. If they got problems, I find out about 'em by *being with my troops*. You guys want to see me about something, you know I'll be around."

Col. Malone's open door policy sounds good on paper, however, the true challenge is in execution. As leaders, it is too

easy to get bogged down in the office, juggling the many administrative tasks of day to day operations. Performance reports have to be written, PIMR data has to be tracked, meetings need to be attended, and emails have to be read.

When a leader is tied to his or her desk the open door policy tends to lose its meaning. Knowing this, Airmen may feel less inclined to take advantage of the traditional open door policy and instead choose to keep their issues to themselves.

Balance is the key to implementing Col Malone's open door concept. As leader's we owe it to our Airmen to communicate with them in an open and professional environment and there is no better place to communicate with your Airmen than in their own work areas. This offers the opportunity for your Airmen to feel more at ease and comfortable in talking to you, the leader, and also offers a neutral area for good and honest conversation.

What better way is there to identify problems, gauge morale, and know your Airmen than when your open door policy is outside the office where the mission is being done?

Leaders, get out from behind your desks, open your doors, and talk to your Airmen on the job or in the field; trust me, you won't regret it.

Letter to Airmen urges energy Conservation

SAN ANTONIO (AFP) -- In the latest Letter to Airmen, Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne recognizes the Air Force commitment to energy conservation.

"As the largest user of energy in the DOD, the Air Force has developed a two-pronged energy strategy to attack this problem. This strategy of assured domestic supply and aggressive energy conservation will benefit our entire Air Force, but we need all Airmen to do their part.

"We continue to look for ways to reduce energy consumption in our facilities, vehicles, and aircraft operations. We reduced facility energy usage by 30 percent over the last 20

years by incorporating energy conservation into our operations -- without impacting the mission or quality of life," the secretary wrote.

"We are currently testing and developing several innovative methods of powering ground vehicles with alternative fuels, such as E-85 ethanol, hydrogen and hybrid fuel cell-electric power systems."

The secretary urged every Airman to personally and professionally conserve energy, and to make energy conservation a way of life.

The complete version of this Letter to Airmen and other senior leader viewpoints can be found in the Library section of Air Force Link.

<http://www.af.mil/library/viewpoints/index.asp>

Recycling Notice:

As a consequence of the cut downs required by the US Air Force on the operations at Thule in FY-07, GC's recycling program has been brought to a stop.

This means, that from now on you no longer separate the following waste: **aluminum cans, glass/bottles, cardboard, and white paper**. This kind of waste goes into the regular dumpsters. The blue and green recycling igloos will be removed from the streets by Pavements & Grounds.

Out of consideration for our janitors, you are all encouraged to collect and throw out the above-mentioned waste into the dumpster yourself in order to avoid unnecessary heavy waste bags. You may want to keep the recycling containers that are placed in all dorms/departments for a collecting purpose, however, these containers will not be emptied by the janitors.

Please notice that Pavements & Grounds will continue to collect larger quantities of cardboard from the following buildings: Base Supply, #801, Vehicle Management, Food Warehouse, Dundas Buffet Restaurant and BMEWS. Other organizations, as well, are welcome to make ad hoc appointments with regards to the collection of larger quantities of cardboard, when needed.

And please remember that batteries as well as electronic equipment still need to be separated from other waste. Please contact the DRMO in such matters.

Greenland Contractors



Thule Tourists



Photo by 1 Lt Charles Holmes

General James Cartwright, Strategic Command commander arrives at Thule.



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Phil Eddy, weather station, gives Dr. Lewis a weather briefing.



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Lt Col TJ Lincoln, Col Edward Fienga, Dr Mark Lewis and Col Robert Fredell pose for a picture outside the 12 Space Warning Squadron.



Photo by Rachel Kasie

The Rob Byer band rocks the TOW club.

This time of year Thule is a popular place for vacations. In September we had three big visits...

■ Gen James Cartwright, Strategic Command commander, visited Thule Sept 6 for an overnight stopover.

General Cartwright toured the 12 Space Warning Squadron, Detachment 3 and did a little exploring at Mount Dundas.

■ Dr Mark Lewis, Chief Scientist of the Air Force and Col Robert Fredell visited Thule Sept 21 for a short overnight stay.

Dr. Lewis and Colonel Fredell toured the 12 Space Warning Squadron, Detachment 3, received a briefing on the weather station and did a little exploring at the Ice Cap and Mount Dundas.

■ The Rob Byer band brought little bit of country and a little bit of rock and roll to Thule.

The band, from Maryland, played three nights of country and rock favorites, as well as a few of their own tunes. The three concerts consisted of two full-blown electric shows in the ballroom at the Top of the World Club and a more laid-back unplugged set in the bar area.



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Lt Col TJ Lincoln, 12 Space Warning Squadron commander gives General Cartwright the 12 SWS mission brief.



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Maj Robert Pavelko, Detachment 3 commander, gives Gen Cartwright a tour of the facilities.



Photo by Capt Elizabeth Paul

Maj Scott Jacobs, 12 Space Warning Squadron, runs Dr. Mark Lewis through a capabilities demonstration.



Courtesy Photo

Members of the Rob Byer band visit Detachment 3 for a mission brief.

Thule Promotions

Photos by Capt Elizabeth Paul



**Airman 1st Class Bradley Lindquist
promoted to Senior Airman**



**Airman Jovanny Reyes
promoted to Airman 1st Class**



**Staff Sgt Vernon Villanueva
promoted to Tech Sgt**



**Airman Daniel Kelley
promoted to Airman 1st Class**



**Airman Jared Estrada
promoted to Airman 1st Class**



**Senior Airman Andrew Way
promoted to Staff Sgt**

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Photos
taken by
Staff Sgt
Thomas
Moreno
and Capt
Mark Oden



Super Base Thule Sweeps Boxtop Olympics

The bi-annual tradition of Boxtop Olympics continued Sept 16 with Team Thule taking top honors.

Unlike most of the previous Boxtop Olympics this time the entire event was held at Thule Air Base. The teams competed in five events; indoor soccer, volleyball, dodge ball, indoor hockey, and basketball. Team Thule won indoor soccer, volleyball, indoor hockey, basketball and a Canadian forfeit in dodge ball allowed Team Thule to sweep the Olympics.



New PT Gear

October 1 marked the mandatory wear date for the Air Force physical training uniform. Here are a few tips to keep Team Thule Airmen on the right side of the regulation when it comes to wearing the new uniform. When participating in organized PT any combination of the PT gear will be worn as a set and not mixed with civilian clothes; at other times any combination of the PT uniform can be worn with civilian clothes. Airmen should remember that commanders determine which PT events are "organized".

The jacket is worn over the T-shirt with either the pants or shorts. When the jacket is worn it can be zipped or unzipped. The jacket hood will be stored and zipped when not worn.



Pant legs do not have to be zipped.



All hats or knit winter caps are authorized to wear with the uniform. Airmen should maintain a professional military image, with no offensive wording, graphics or photos on any item worn with the PT uniform. Bandanas and other similar headscarves or headgear are not authorized without a medical waiver.



Headphones and earphones are authorized while in gym area or on the SAC ramp. However, they can not be worn during warm-up and cool-down formations.



The T-shirt may be tucked in or left out. Airmen can choose either short or long sleeves Air Force PT shirts.



Shorts will be worn with T-shirt. The lining in the shorts may be removed but you cannot alter other PT items.



Spandex shorts and leggings, either navy or black, may be worn under shorts. Full length leggings may be worn during cold weather periods.



Things to know about the physical training uniform.

- Undergarments are mandatory with all PT gear combination.
- Additional civilian clothing items may be added to the uniform, but color consistency should be reasonably compatible to support a professional appearance.
- Hair standards do not apply while in the PT gear.
- Saluting is not required.
- Jewelry wear will follow normal uniform wear rules, but Airmen should keep safety in mind.
- Safety items or other additional items such as ski wraps, sweatbands (in black, blue or white), reflective belts, personnel hydration systems, fanny packs, arm-bands, gloves and others are all authorized while performing individual physical training in the PT uniform.

Socks will be white but can be any length and may have small conservative trade-mark logos.



Any Athletic shoe is authorized.

